161 genealogical record, give for 1902, 132·2 men for every 100
162 women, a proportion distinctly greater than that of the census, which suggests that it is in the female portion of the community that my records are most defective.

In the table on p. 474 taken from Mr. Punnett's paper, it is seen that the data derived from the genealogical record agree with those of the Census Reports in showing on the whole a progressive decrease in the excess of men over women. The number of families in the first group is too small to give them much importance, but for the three succeeding generations of the Tartharol, the numbers of males for every 100 females are 159·7, 131·4, and 129·2, while for the Teivaliol the figures are 259, 202, and 171 respectively.

The Census Reports and the genealogical record thus agree in showing a progressive diminution in the excess of men over women.

178 There can be little doubt as to the cause of this. All
847 accounts of the Todas agree in attributing to them the
124 practice of female infanticide, though, at the present time,
521 the Todas are very chary of acknowledging the existence of the practice. They deny it absolutely for the present, and they are reluctant to speak about it for the past.

I do not think that there is the slightest doubt that it was at one time very prevalent, and that it has greatly diminished in frequency, but that it is still practised to some extent. The chance remarks of children to my interpreter, Samuel, had shown him that the practice is still followed occasionally, and I think it far from unlikely that it is even now not a very rare occurrence.

162 In Mr. Punnett's table, it will be seen that the genealogical
177 data show that the excess of men is far greater in the
184 Teivaliol than in the Tartharol, and the excess in the former is so great as to leave little doubt that the practice is still
847 followed in this division not infrequently. If this is so, it is probably due to the fact that the Teivaliol chiefly inhabit the more outlying parts of the hills, so that, on the whole, they have been less affected than the Tartharol by the various influences which have come into the lives of the Todas. An

I: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

accessory factor may have been the priestly functions of the Teivaliol, which have probably tended to make them more conservative.

Previous writers on the Todas have differed considerably in their accounts of the method of infanticide, and I regret very much that I cannot contribute any facts towards the settlement of the question. The subject was one about which the Todas talked so unwillingly that I made no great endeavours to arrive at the truth. A method which has been commonly attributed to the Todas is that of placing the infant at the gate of the buffalo-pen before this is opened in the morning, the herd rushing out and trampling on the child. Another less likely method has been said to be that the infant is drowned in buffalo milk.

The most probable account is that given to Marshall[1] by an aged Toda, who stated that the child is suffocated by an old woman, who receives a fee of four annas, and that the child is then buried, which, as we have seen, is the method of disposing of the bodies of still-born children.

There is little reason to connect the practice of female infanticide among the Todas with any deficiency in the necessaries for existence. It seems clear that at one time the Todas supplemented their food of milk with berries, roots, &c., but it is improbable that they were ever in such straits for food that they would have resorted to infanticide on this account. Marshall's informant ascribed infanticide to the poverty of his people, but this was probably said in order to excuse the practice.

In an earlier part of this chapter we saw that there is evidence of a former diminution of the Toda population. At the same time we see that there is evidence of a diminution of the practice of female infanticide, which would, of course, tend to increase the population. It would thus seem that there have existed among the Todas, during the last fifty years, certain factors tending to diminish the population and one factor tending to increase it. We may conclude that, but for the diminution of infanticide, the falling off in numbers would have been greater, and that the tendency to increase which

[1] Pp. 194-5.

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161 seems at present to exist may be due, wholly or in part, to
847 the diminution of infanticide.

There is one indication that female infanticide has almost
163 entirely ceased during the last five years, and even that there may now be an excess of female births. In the table of ages given on page 469, it will be seen that the pedigrees record more girls than boys of five years and under. There is no reason why my record of such young children should have been more defective for one sex than for the other, and the proportion here may be approximately correct.

TWINS

845 Twins are called *ömumokh*, and it is the custom to kill one
847 of them, even when both are boys. If they should be girls, it is probable that both would be killed, or, at any rate, would have been killed in the past.

There is one case of twins in the genealogies. Iraveli, the wife of Kwötuli and Nudriki (8), gave birth to twins about twelve years ago. Both were boys, and I was first told that one had died shortly after birth, but later inquiries made it almost certain that the boy had been killed. Some time after the birth of the twins, one of the buffaloes of Kwötuli and Nudriki is said to have had a calf with one body, two heads, and four legs. The buffalo died before the calf was born, and the monstrosity was found by the Kotas, to whom the body was given. It was generally expected that something would happen to Kwötuli or Nudriki, but they have since been very prosperous.

THE DETERMINATION OF AGE

805 This is a suitable place to say a word about the method I
128 adopted to ascertain the ages of the Todas. Like all people at a low stage of culture, the Todas are very uncertain about their ages, though their knowledge is more accurate than that of many peoples. Every Toda knows, however, whether he is older or younger than another, this fact determining the

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

595 842 851 The fatherhood of a child depends entirely on the *pursütpimi* ceremony, so much so that a dead man is regarded as the father of a child if no other man has performed the essential ceremony.[1]

In the only case in the genealogies in which the husbands of a woman were of different clans, it happened there were only two children, and that one father gave the bow and arrow for the first child and the other for the second.

If the husbands separate, each husband takes with him those children who are his by virtue of the *pursütpimi* ceremony.

595 847 182 There is no doubt whatever as to the close association of the polyandry of the Todas with female infanticide. As we have seen, the Todas now profess to have completely given up the practice of killing their female children, but it is highly probable that the practice is still in vogue to some extent. It has certainly, however, diminished in frequency, and the consequent increase in the proportion of women is leading to some modification in the associated polyandry.

178 182 595 It has been stated by most of those who have written about the Todas that the custom of polyandry is dying out, but a glance at the genealogies will show that the institution is in full working order even in the case of the infant marriages which are being contracted at the present time. There is, however, some reason to believe that it is now less frequent for all the brothers of a family to have one wife only in common. A study of the genealogies shows that often each brother has his own wife, or that several brothers have more than one wife between them. It seemed to me, however, almost certain that in these cases the brothers have the wives in common. In compiling the genealogies, one informant would give me the names of two or more brothers each with one wife, while another would give me the name of one brother with two or three wives, and would say that the other brothers had the same wives. When I pointed out the discrepancy and asked which was the true account, they usually said it made no difference and were almost contemptuous because I seemed to think that there was any disagreement

[1] For an instance, see p. 535.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

587 however, from the account already given, that polyandry is still
595 strongly established among the Todas. Still, there are a few cases in the genealogies which seem to show that when two brothers had different wives, and one brother died, the widow might be taken by the surviving brother. Thus, in Table 34, two brothers, Matovan and Kemners, had one wife, Sargveli, while Atcharap had his own wife, Puners. When Matovan died, Sargveli was regarded as the wife of both Atcharap and Kemners.[1] Again, after the deaths of Mulpolivan and Peigvan (3), the widow of Nersveli was married by Perol, the clan-brother (first cousin) of the husband.

In other cases, the widow of one brother has not become the wife of her husband's brothers, but has married elsewhere; and though the evidence is necessarily very unsatisfactory, it seems on the whole probable that the Todas show no special relation between polyandry and the Levirate custom.

If the widow marries a man who is not one of the brothers of her dead husband, the new husband has to pay a certain number of buffaloes. He does not, however, give these buffaloes to the brothers of the dead man, but to his children; thus, when Karnisi of Pām (37) died, his widow, Nersaveli, married Mutthuvan (34) of Kanòdrs, who paid fourteen buffaloes to Pungievan, the son of Karnisi. This payment of buffaloes is known as *terkudrichti*, "compensation he gives," and it is the custom for the number of buffaloes in this case to be twice the number given by the dead man for his wife; in this case Karnisi had taken Nersaveli from another man for seven buffaloes.

In relation to the Levirate, the important point here is that the buffaloes are paid to the sons of the dead husbands, not to his brothers.

194 I do not think that the Todas provide any definite evidence
847 towards the solution of the vexed question of the relation
595 between polyandry and infanticide. It is possible that at their first arrival in the Nilgiri Hills, the Todas had few sources of food, and had a severe struggle for existence; that

[1] It will be noticed that I am using the term 'Levirate' in a wider sense than that in which it is sometimes employed, for Sargveli was not a childless widow.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

they therefore adopted the practice of female infanticide, and that polyandry followed as a consequence. At the present and during recent times there has certainly been no economical motive for infanticide, and I am very doubtful whether it has ever existed. I think it far more probable that the Todas brought the practice of polyandry with them when they came to the Nilgiris; but if this view should be adopted, there is still no evidence to show whether they also brought infanticide with them, or whether this custom developed owing to the fact that polyandry diminished the need for female children.

POLYGYNY

In the last section we have seen that there is a tendency for the polyandry of the Todas to become combined with polygyny. Two brothers, who in former times would have had one wife between them, may now take two wives, but as a general rule the two men have the two wives in common. In addition, polygyny of the more ordinary kind exists among the Todas, and is probably now increasing in frequency, as one of the results of the diminished female infanticide.

One example of polygyny is the marriage of Kuriolv (56) with two wives, one of about the same age as himself, the other a young wife whom he shares with Onadj (57). In another case Odrkurs (1), has two wives, the second wife being a young girl recently married in the hope of obtaining a son (see p. 550).

There is one example of polygyny in the genealogies in which a young boy, Mokudr of Nidrsi (42), has two wives, both young girls. He has been doubly married in order that he may get rid of one of his wives by the *terersthi* custom and so become rich. He has been married to two wives in order that he may sell one.

When a man or a group of men have more than one wife, the two wives usually live together at the same village, but sometimes they live at different villages, the husband or husbands moving about from one village to the other.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca, 1901-02) 1906 Toda

sacred function is not limited to that division. The magical powers of the sorcerer seem to be now almost equally divided among the two divisions, and there is no evidence that magical powers in the past have been attributed to one division more than to the other.

In the preceding pages I have put together the chief evidence which throws any light on the problem raised by the existence of the two divisions of the Toda people. It is far from conclusive, but I incline to the view that the present organisation of the Todas is due to the coalescence of two tribes or castes which came to the hills at different times. It seems probable that the Tartharol arrived first and occupied the hills widely. When later the Teivaliol came, it seems possible that they were placed by the Tartharol in those priestly offices which, though honourable, involved many hardships and restrictions, and were assigned dwelling-places and pastures in a comparatively limited district of the hills.

The analysis of the genealogical record has brought out some interesting differences between the two divisions. The data compiled from the genealogical tables by Mr. Punnett[1] would seem to show that the preponderance of males was and is still greater among the Teivaliol than among the Tartharol. The tables provide statistics roughly for four generations. In the second of these,[2] the number of males for every hundred females was 159·7 among the Tartharol, 259 among the Teivaliol. For the last generation, these numbers have sunk to 129·2 and 171 respectively. These figures almost certainly mean that female infanticide was more in vogue among the Teivaliol and is still practised by them to a greater extent than by the Tartharol.

This would seem to show that the Teivaliol have clung more closely to the old custom of infanticide and may be taken as an indication of the greater conservativeness of the priestly caste, but the Teivaliol chiefly occupy those parts of the hills furthest removed from the European settlements,

[1] *Proc. Camb. Philos. Soc.*, 1904, vol. xii, p. 481.

[2] I neglect the first generation on account of the small number of families for which there are data.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

and the greater freedom from external influence is probably an important reason for the greater frequency of infanticide among them at present, though it will not explain the greater prevalence in the earlier generations.

The Teivaliol are now much the smaller of the two divisions, the numbers at the most liberal estimate being less than half of those of the Tartharol, and this difference is certainly of long standing. It may be due to original disproportion of numbers, but if female infanticide has long been more frequent among the Teivaliol, this might furnish a cause of their smaller population. It is perhaps significant in this connexion that the only extinct clan of which I have a record is a Teivali clan, the Kemenol, which is said to have become extinct about a hundred years ago, and the causes which led to its extinction may well have produced a great diminution of numbers in other branches of the Teivaliol.

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Toda

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[For the author's theories of the origin and development of polyandry and infanticide, see category 116, pp. 223-232.]

 In paragraph (a) of the last Chapter, I showed that the

162 Toda males of all ages bear to the females, the proportion of 100:75; and the correctness of this statement is somewhat confirmed by the ratio in adults and in children, given in paragraphs (β) and (γ) bearing a similar discrepancy. This excess

947 of males is a very striking fact, and its truth may be accepted without doubt or mental reserve. I think we cannot quite account for the universal paucity of females without acknowledging, either that infanticide is, or has recently been practised to a very sensible extent: or that more boys are *born* than girls.

000 To what cause may we attribute this wide departure in nature, from those of her well-established laws; by the operations of which, equality between the sexes, is, within certain limits of divergence, known to be preserved, in all countries of whose population we have accurate knowledge? If we are disposed to describe the cause, in some general expression, as 'race peculiarity,' we still cannot be satisfied with less than the discovery of the physiologic reason for such eccentricity. We note the food and clothing, the mode of life, the climate; and fail to see sufficient reason for ascribing what we seek to any such origin. In fact, as regards the Todas, we can with certainty pronounce, that in only two respects can their surroundings be considered to differ widely in an important manner, from that of vast masses of mankind to whom great variation between the sexes has never been traced; viz., in their marriage system, and in the practice of infanticide.

162 582 We have learnt that relationship is, with the Todas, intimate far beyond that witnessed in any country approaching civilisation. Intimate to such a degree, that the whole tribe, where not parents and children, brothers and sisters, are all first-cousins, descended from lines of first-cousins prolonged for centuries. Let me show emphatically and distinctly that such is in truth the case. The tribe consists of about 713 persons, divided between 5 clans; of which

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two are almost extinct. The remaining three clans, being nearly of equal number, must contain about 200 members of all ages each. But one of them—the Peiki clan—marries solely within itself. Hence, this small body of 200 people have intermarried from time immemorial. And the intercourse must have become very promiscuous. I do not attribute disparity between the sexes to this close intercourse; but it is interesting to review the primitive practice, as a custom connected with the paucity of numbers arising from infanticide, and with the polyandrous habit which is found in junction with it.

In future chapters we shall see that the practice of infanticide as observed by the Todas, was the habitual destruction of all daughters in every family, except one or sometimes two. And we know that the average size of Toda families is 6 children born to each woman.

Now let us for the purpose of illustration take three families as representing an average of the entire tribe; say that one mother gives birth to 6 daughters and no sons: a second mother has 6 sons only, whilst the third mother has 3 sons and 3 daughters. The first mother—following the tribal custom—destroys 4 daughters and preserves 2. The second retains her 6 sons. The third kills 2 daughters and keeps 1, as also her 3 sons. We have then, from the three families, 9 sons and 3 daughters with which to continue the breed. But whilst the males belong to families in which the tendency to produce sons is great, the females are of those of a converse inclination. Thus the bias strengthens with each generation, until, as we find, families grow to have habitually more sons than daughters. This habitude *outlasting the depraved practice which caused it*, indurates more or less, into a fixed characteristic of the people: and *a male-producing variety of man is formed.*

In presenting Table No. 4, containing what I have termed 'Statistics of Toda Families,' to the indulgence of my readers,

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their motives and their action proximate and uninvolved, we have the ready means afforded us of tracing, by a comparatively short and easy road, up to first causes, and thus of acquiring an insight into human impulse, which may prove serviceable even in judging of more complicated races, and must ever be interesting to obtain.

Fortunately for the preservation of the human race, which must otherwise have become extinct, primitive tribes are greatly attached to their children. We may safely assume, therefore, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that where wholesale destruction of progeny by the parents themselves, is looked on as an obligation which has devolved on them in order to save their race from destruction—where in fact, it is largely a work of love—there the act would be performed without needless violence. In those tribes where children are killed in a heartless manner; whether by prolonged neglect or in some actively cruel method, we shall probably not be far wrong in ascribing such action to selfish, ignoble motives.

The following is the interesting evidence of an aged Toda, who speaks of what has been enacted under his own eyes. I give the narration very nearly in his own words;—

847 'I was a little boy when Mr. Sullivan[1] visited these mountains. In those days it was the custom to kill children; but the practice has long died out, and now one never hears of it.

'I don't know whether it was wrong or not to kill them, but we were very poor, and could not support our children. Now every one has a mantle—putkuli—but formerly there was only one for the whole family, and he who had to go out took the mantle; the rest remaining naked at home: naked all but the loin-cloth—kûvn.

[1] Mentioned in Chapter VIII., Note 3. The English officer who first mounted the Nilagiri plateau, and visited the homes of the Todas. Events of Toda importance all date from the visit of Sulaivan Dore, as we quote the Christian era.

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'We did not kill them to please any God, but because it was our custom.

'The mother never nursed the child—no, never! and the parents did not kill it. How could we do so! Do you think we could kill it ourselves!

'Those tell lies who say we laid it down before the opening of the buffalo pen, so that it might be run over and killed by the animals![2] We never did such things! and it is all nonsense, that we drowned it in buffalo's milk![3]

'Boys were never killed—only girls; not those who were sickly and deformed—*that would be a sin*—papum; but when we had one girl,[4] or in some families two girls, those that followed were killed.

'This is the way it was done. An old woman—kelachi[5]—used to take the child immediately it was born, and close its nostrils, ears, and mouth, with cloth thus'—here pantomimic action. 'It would shortly droop its head and go to sleep. We then *buried* it in the ground.[6] The kelachi got a present of four annas[7] for the deed.

'I don't know if the infants thus killed, go to amnôr. Who can tell such a thing!'

[2] I find the following passage in a letter from the Collector of Coimbatore, dated 25th June, 1856, to the address of the Secretary to the Government of Fort St. George, very kindly placed at my disposal by the Revenue Department, Madras; 'The mode of destroying the infant, if a female, is by exposing it the next morning at the door of the cattle kraal; when first opened, the whole herd, half wild, rush over and annihilate the wretched infant—the Todas never lifting their own hand against it.'

[3] This response had reference to a report then current, of this second mode of destroying children.

[4] The truth of this statement is confirmed by a letter from Mr. J. Sullivan, Collector of Coimbatore, dated 5th July, 1820, to the Secretary to the Governor of Fort St. George.

[5] Also means 'a female friend.' See Chapter VII., Note 1.

[6] It will be remembered that Todas *burn* their dead. By burying these infants, can it be, that the people thought they had got rid of them *for ever and ever*? Hence my question, to which the next paragraph forms a reply.

[7] Four annas is equal to sixpence of English money.

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847 I am well convinced that the old man spoke the strict truth in describing the practice of infanticide as a thing of the past; basing my belief, on the general appearance of things, rather than on statistics. (1.) If the custom still prevailed, the circumstance could not have remained hidden from the people of neighbouring tribes, with whom a very close degree of intimacy is maintained: and its commission forming a topic of conversation in their bazaars and meetings, the news would in due course certainly have reached our ears. (2.) The people sitting before us, in course of close examination as to the number and condition of their families, would undoubtedly have evinced by manner or voice, if at any time, we were approaching a dreaded and secret subject. (3.) Two, three, and even four living daughters were met with in families: and I may add, the girls looked in very good condition and as well cared for, as the rest of the household.

177 847 168 In the year 1822—or 48 years prior to the date of my census—the Government of Madras put a pressure on the Todas, in order to impel them to forsake their murderous practice.[a] But no statistics exist, and none can now be formed, that will afford us means of judging the actual state of the habit, anterior to that date.

847 In a previous chapter of this book—in that treating on the Census—the average age at which Toda women commence to bear children, is noted as 17 years. Those women therefore, who are 48+17=65 years old, must be the earliest who show the effect of the Government's repressive action. Hence it is, that we must look to the information regarding births and deaths which has been afforded by the mothers, rating from

[a] Owing to a deficiency in the records of the Madras Government, we do not know how infanticide was actually stopped; but the orders given in its letter of 21st July, 1820, were to frustrate the practice 'by all means of encouragement and persuasion.' In carrying these orders into effect, I believe that the persuasion employed was of an impressive character.

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TABLE No. VIII.

Compiled from 'Statistics of Toda Families,' Table No. IV., in order to ascertain the progress made towards checking Infanticide. Arranged according to the 'present ages of Wives.'

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Present Ages of Wives	No. on the List	Detail						Abstract									Remarks
		Progeny															
		Alive		Dead		Born		Alive		Dead		Born		Proportion of females to 100 males			
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	A.	D.	B.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
65	4	2	2	2	2	4	4										No doubtful cases have been omitted, in extracting from 'Statistics of Toda Families,' except those whose returns appear to be doubtful, or are valueless to the subject under review.
65	53	2	2	5	1	7	3	14	7	9	8	23	15	50	88·9	65·2	
60	6	3	2	0	0	3	2										
60	28	4	0	0	2	4	4										
55	27	3	1	2	3	5	4										
55	43	1	2	3	0	4	2										
55	48	4	1	2	2	6	3										
50	8	3	1	1	0	4	1	17	9	9	5	26	14	52·9	55·6	53·8	
50	21	3	2	2	2	5	4										
50	42	2	1	1	0	3	2										
45	22	4	2	0	1	4	3										
45	36	3	3	1	1	4	4										
45	37	3	3	2	1	5	4										
42	23	1	2	2	0	3	2	18	20	12	5	30	25	111·1	41·7	83·3	
42	54	2	1	2	0	4	1										
40	3	0	3	0	0	0	3										
40	15	3	2	2	1	5	3										
38	44	3	4	2	1	5	5										
38	10	3	2	1	0	4	2										
35	18	2	2	1	1	3	3										
32	19	0	3	0	0	0	3										
30	46	4	1	0	0	4	1										
28	25	1	0	0	0	1	0										
28	1	2	2	0	0	2	2										
27	51	2	1	1	0	3	1	24	17	2	3	26	20	70·8	150	77	
25	2	1	1	1	0	2	1										
25	38	1	1	0	0	1	1										
24	20	1	1	0	0	1	1										
22	11	0	1	0	0	0	1										
20	30	0	1	0	0	0	1										
18	26	1	1	0	0	1	1										
15	14	1	0	0	1	1	1										
		73	53	32	21	105	74							72·6	65·6	70·5	

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65 years down to the youngest married women, if we would trace the abatement of infanticide.

847 It is much to be regretted that the statistics of Table No. 8 162 do not afford a record so complete as could be desired; even 847 to the degree I had fondly calculated on their doing, in the 163 course of our careful enquiries in the field. The instances, though certainly few in number, should distinctly have pointed to the change that was being effected in the course of forty-eight years; by enabling us to trace some sort of declining scale in the contrast of the sexes. The disproportion between males and females is indeed great in the Table, but it neither increases nor lessens in any form of sequence.

I have allowed the Table a place in these pages, despite its acknowledged deficiencies, and notwithstanding that the statistics, taken by themselves, give every appearance of the venerable practice being in full vigour, whilst I am fully convinced by the circumstantial evidences which I have given, that such is not the truth. I have done so, because it thus obtains a value, in showing that *the practice of infanticide may be extinct, whilst statistics indicate its actual prevalence;* that, in fact, the strange numerical difference in the sexes, which the census shows to amount to 25 per cent., implies with certainty, only that infanticide has *lately* been practised. If the custom were in its fullest possible force, consistent with the preservation of the race, the sexual divergence would be as great as 100 to 33·3; a proportion which allows one girl on an average, to every family—with less than which allowance, the race could not survive.

My readers will have noticed in Chapter XI. the suggestion, that a curious result of long continued infanticide, has been to create a male-producing variety of the human race.

165 It will be observed that in the Table[1] the proportion of females who have died, to 100 males, is 65·6: whilst of those alive, it is 72·6. This discrepancy bears evidence to the inaccuracy of the statistics. Judging from the circumstances

[1] [See p. 199, Category 163 -- Analysis]

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compensatory skill of savages, which they owe greatly to their large organ of Weight.

In the description of the Toda character, founded on phrenologic basis, which I afforded in previous chapters, I have endeavoured to express, how weak they are in those groups of mental qualities which enable men to surmount difficulties in life by the force of their natural energies; how that their whole nature is built for the maintenance of the existing state of things: how free from cruelty, and how fond of children: how practical their character, though limited in range of vision: and how deficient in tenacity.

I have also tried to enable my readers to realise the early state of things; when the increase of numbers due to the luxurious nature of an equatorial climate had outstepped the supply of food: and the growth of human intellect—giving the ability to augment the supply—had failed to keep pace with the growing density of the population.

Now, resolve all these forces—the natural tendencies of primitive man, and the circumstances by which surrounded—in such direction as exactly to neutralise one another; and you work out the problem which the Todas had to solve. Only three courses were open to them: (1.) The progressive exercise of combined labour and skill. (2.) Abstinence from marriage. (3.) Destruction of children.

They tried the first, and failed. In regard to the second, Nature, who is ever careful of her own interests, was doubtless altogether too strong for them. We see they adopted the third course, but in such manner as to give their gentle natures—gentle above all to children—the least suffering, by killing the infants without pain, and before the parents had opportunity to love them.

The great similarity in the dispositions of the two sexes assures me that mothers co-operated with fathers willingly in the deed.

If the Todas had possessed a large organ of *Acquisitiveness*,

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

tradition, to retain, in some instances, more than one daughter in a family; thus forming a small reserve of women, with which the vacancies which would arise in other families, from a deficiency in female births, or from girls not having been raised to years of maturity, find a counterpoise.

The exceptional practice of polyandry, which had, in an unpremeditated manner, thus grown, merely from the infanticide which had disturbed the natural proportion of the sexes, might be expected to retain something of the promiscuous ways, which for ages had been so much in consonance with gregarious and primitive tastes. Now that the custom of infanticide has been relinquished, and the discrepancy between the sexes, which was its immediate fruit, has become less remarkable—though very far from having vanished—I observe communism still remaining *de facto*, the loved habit of the people, whilst monogamy grows to be the national form of marriage. It may be that the Todas in this process of change, are merely *reverting* to an ancient usage—that prior to infanticide—instigated by the natural predilections of unaltered dispositions. Perhaps their habits are becoming modified by the influence of surrounding monogamic races.

I very much doubt if the custom of polyandry, taken in the ordinary acceptation of that word, viz., the union of brothers only, to one wife, can anywhere be found as the sole national form of marriage; thus assuming the airs of a respectable, even if eccentric custom; for, bearing in mind the extreme gregariousness of their dispositions, and intimacy of their lives: considering, also, the absolute necessity for every soul to marry, it is evident that the actual nature of the tie must very greatly depend on the living ratio of the sexes; which, of course, could not be maintained at one undeviating level. When the proportions balance, the savage prefers a promiscuous style: but as they widen, and the males preponderate, the practice of monogamy is seen, coexistent with that of a polyandry in which the husbands are *so-called* brothers.

houses, and I am informed by an officer who has been for many years on the Hills, that he has frequently found them in the woods cooking meat, which they appeared anxious to hide.

Polyandry is on the decline amongst them, and its practice depends now chiefly on the means of individuals. It is considered desirable for each man to have his own wife if he can afford it, and some few men have two; but in poor families two or more younger brothers have still but one wife; in this case the brothers generally live in separate houses and take the wife in turn.

The practice of female infanticide has, I believe, entirely ceased. Indeed I can hardly induce any Toda to acknowledge that it ever existed. The disproportion, however, between the number of men and women supports Mr. Meta's assertion that it was practised within the last thirty years.

Their pastimes are not numerous. They are expert at a game called *Ilda*, which is played as follows:—

A cylindrical piece of wood pointed at both ends is placed against the corner of a stone; a slight tap from a stick sends it flying into the air; as it comes down the batsman hits it away to a great distance, and scouts are posted to catch it as it falls. In fact *Ilda* is a variety of *tipcat*.

Another game is called *Narthpimi* (*Plate* X.) Close to some manda a sort of stone table may be observed, consisting of two slabs stuck edgewise into the ground and another laid across them, leaving an opening just large enough for a man to drag himself through on his stomach. Two stones are fixed as starting posts, one at about thirty the other about sixty yards from the table. A man stands by each of these, and the nearer of the two runs to the table, and tries to wriggle under it, before the other, starting at the same time from the farther stone, can catch him. The rapidity with which they squeeze through the opening must be the result of long practice in crawling in and out of their house doors.

A third game, called *Karidlapimi*, has some resemblance to puss in the corner.

Some of them, by way of a trial of strength, lift a large round stone (*Plate* X.), raising it first to the knee, and rolling it up the thigh and the chest on to the shoulder. The stone must be very heavy, for putting forth all my strength, I could not raise it more than two inches from the ground. The man I saw lifting it, was a fine athletic fellow, but he strained every nerve in the effort, and only one other man in the mand could do it at all.

For a list of Toda garments, ornaments, household utensils, &c., see Appendix B.[1]

Major King, in his article in the *Journal of Anthropology* of July 1870, describes the Toda dress as follows:—

"The garment* in which the Toda envelopes himself is of a thick, coarse, "cotton cloth of native manufacture, white when clean, and having a red stripe or

* *Toda: Putkuli.*

[1] [Calcutta MS, pp. 117–123.—Analysis]

595 among them. When the girl becomes the wife of a boy, it is usually understood that she becomes also the wife of his brothers. In nearly every case at the present time, and in recent generations, the husbands of a woman are own brothers. In a few cases, though not brothers, they are of the same clan. Very rarely do they belong to
595 different clans. One of the most interesting features of
851 Toda polyandry is the method by which it is arranged who shall be regarded as the father of a child. For all social and legal purposes, the father of a child is the man
[843] who performs a certain ceremony about the seventh month of pregnancy, in which an imitation bow and arrow are given to the woman. When the husbands are own brothers, the eldest brother usually gives the bow and arrow, and is the father of the child, though, so long as the brothers live together, the other brothers are also regarded as fathers. It is in the cases in which the husbands are not own brothers that the ceremony becomes of real social importance. In these cases, it is arranged that one of the husbands shall give the bow and arrow, and this man is the father, not only of the child born shortly afterwards, but also of all succeeding children, till another husband performs the essential ceremony. Fatherhood is determined so essentially by this ceremony that a man who has been dead for several years is regarded as the father of any children born by his widow, if no other man has given the bow and arrow.
595 There is no doubt that, in former times, the polyandry
[847] of the Todas was associated with female infanticide, and it is probable that the latter custom still exists to some extent, though strenuously denied. There is reason to
[162] believe that women are now more plentiful than formerly, though they are still in a distinct minority. Any increase, however, in the number of women does not

7:Thurston E-5 (no date)1909
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595 when they return to the mand. The time is determined,
851 in the vicinity of Ootacamund, by the opening of the
842 flowers of *Onothera tetraptera* (evening primrose), a
[805] garden escape called by the Todas āru mani pūv (six
[824] o'clock flower), which opens towards evening.* It may
[765] be noted that, at the second funeral of a male, a miniature bow and three arrows are burnt with various other articles within the stone circle (azaram).

648 A few years ago (1902), the Todas, in a petition to
585 Government, prayed for special legislation to legalise their marriages on the lines of the Malabar Marriage Act. The Government was of opinion that legislation was unnecessary, and that it was open to such of the Todas as were willing to sign the declaration prescribed by section 10 of the Marriage Act III of 1872 to contract legal marriages under the provision of that Act. The Treasury Deputy Collector of the Nīlgiris was appointed Registrar of Toda marriages. No marriage has been registered up to the present time.

●847 The practice of infanticide among the Todas is best
178 summed up in the words of an aged Toda during an interview with Colonel Marshall.† "I was a little boy when Mr. Sullivan (the first English pioneer of the Nilgiris) visited these mountains. In those days it was the custom to kill children, but the practice has long died out, and now one never hears of it. I don't know whether it was wrong or not to kill them, but we were very poor, and could not support our children. Now every one has a mantle (putkuli), but formerly there was only one for the whole family. We did not kill them to please any god, but because it was our custom. The mother never nursed the child, and the parents did

* I have seen this plant growing on the grass in front of the Pulikōn bungalow.
† *Op. cit.*

7:Thurston E-5 (no date)1909
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not kill it. Do you think we could kill it ourselves? Those tell lies who say we laid it down before the opening of the buffalo-pen, so that it might be run over and killed by the animals. We never did such things, and it is all nonsense that we drowned it in buffalo's milk. Boys were never killed—only girls; not those who were sickly and deformed—that would be a sin; but, when we had one girl, or in some families two girls, those that followed were killed. An old woman (kelachi) used to take the child immediately it was born, and close its nostrils, ears, and mouth with a cloth thus—here pantomimic action. It would shortly droop its head, and go to sleep. We then buried it in the ground. The kelachi got a present of four annas for the deed." The old man's remark about the cattle-pen refers to the Malagasy custom of placing a new-born child at the entrance to a cattle-pen, and then driving the cattle over it, to see whether they would trample on it or not.* The Missionary Metz† bears out the statement that the Toda babies were killed by suffocation.

At the census, 1901, 453 male and 354 female Todas were returned. In a note on the proportion of the sexes among the Todas, Mr. R. C. Punnett states‡ that "all who have studied the Todas are agreed upon the frequency of the practice (of infanticide) in earlier times. Marshall, writing in 1872, refers to the large amount of female infanticide in former years, but expresses his conviction that the practice had by that time died out. Marshall's evidence is that of native assurance only. Dr. Rivers, who received the same assurance, is disinclined to place much confidence in

* Ellis. History of Madagascar.
† Tribes inhabiting the Neilgherry Hills. By a German missionary, 1856.
‡ Proc. Cambridge Philosoph. Soc., XII, 1904.

7:Thurston E-5 (no date)1909
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847 native veracity with reference to this point, and, in view
178 of the lack of encouragement which the practice receives from the Indian Government, this is not altogether surprising. The supposition of female infanticide, by accounting for the great disproportion in the numbers of the sexes, brings the Todas into harmony with what is known of the rest of mankind." In summarising his conclusions, Mr. Punnett notes that:—

[167] (1) Among the Todas, males predominate greatly over females.

(2) This preponderance is doubtless due to the practice of female infanticide, which is probably still to some extent prevalent.

(3) The numerical preponderance of the males has been steadily sinking during recent years, owing probably to the check which foreign intercourse has imposed upon female infanticide.

764 In connection with the death ceremonies of the Todas, Dr. Rivers notes that "soon after death the body is burnt, and the general name for the ceremony on this occasion is etvainolkedr, the first day funeral. After an interval, which may vary greatly in length, a second [765] ceremony is performed, connected with certain relics of the deceased which have been preserved from the first occasion. The Toda name for this second funeral ceremony is marvainolkedr, the second day funeral, or 'again which day funeral.' The funeral ceremonies are [574] open to all, and visitors are often invited by the Todas. In consequence, the funeral rites are better known, and have been more frequently described than any other features of Toda ceremonial. Like nearly every institu-
764 tion of the Todas, however, they have become known to
192 Europeans under their Badaga names. The first funeral is called by the Badagas hase kedu, the fresh or green

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

sacred rivers in general, nor climb holy hillocks upon which gods are supposed to live. They are not entitled to practise sorcery (I never came across a case of them doing so), to eat parts of the sacrificed calf of the *erkumptthpimi* ceremony (Rivers, *The Todas*, p. 274), to approach the spot where buffaloes are killed at funerals (for fear that they should see the bell of the temple upon which they are not allowed to set eyes), to attend the ceremony of offering a buffalo calf to a *ti-mad* called *irnörtit* (op. cit. p. 293); Teivilkh women are, besides, not permitted ever to visit the *mads* of the Tardharsh division.

The inferior status of women is further emphasized by sexual privileges connected with the office of the Teivilkh priests. Thus, the *tarvalikartmokh* has unrestricted access whenever he wishes to all women of the *mad* at which he is serving, even though these may be Tardharsh, that is, whom, normally, as members of the lower moiety, he may not approach. The *kurpalikartmokh* can sleep with the Tardharsh women of his choice, but only on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. The *wursol* may do the same on Sundays and Wednesdays only, and may not have any relations during the time that he is priest with any Teivilkh women, not even his wife if he is married. The *palol* of the *ti* may cohabit with the Tardharsh woman that he wants (from any *mad*) outside the precincts of the *ti-mad*, but within the sanctified territory, that is, in practice, in the *sholas* only (Rivers denies this, but I have confirmed it in *The Todas, Some Additions and Corrections to W. H. R. River's Book, Observed in the Field*, see Bibliography).

Todas prefer men to women to such a degree that female infanticide was, and is still to some extent, practised in the tribe, something to which we shall have occasion to revert further on. Toda society is a patriarchal one, in which the men are dominant and in which they treat their women, as most polyandrous people do, as their property. This belies the deceptive appearance of freedom which the females give on first acquaintance, an appearance which one very soon learns to appreciate at its true value when one gets to know the tribe better.

After adult marriage the bride always takes up her residence with her husband or husbands as the case may be, no known case of uxoriilocal dwelling having ever taken place. She becomes a member of his or their *modol*, giving the latter a territorial appearance. At the same time she ceases to belong to her maiden one, but continues nevertheless to be part of her own *polkhliol*. Inheritance is always exclusively through the male line, the father's or fathers' brothers, the next of kin

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being with the buffaloes and are usually put in charge of the grazing of the herd. He too is reputed to be "good" with the animals. 159 621

(25) Närshmali: A lively and comely young woman, who keeps her household very tidy. She is always washing herself or doing her hair, in full view of everybody, which she seems to enjoy. She pours water over herself from a pot with her undergarment on, tightly tied under her armpits, it is true, but she very often lets it slip when drying herself, with exclamations of consternation, as if it were an accident. She is [832] quite a flirt at Toda gatherings, and I have seen Pilkhlivowutn have to [837] search for her in the bushes of a *shola* and drive her home again with a stick. Her second husband, Porshwutn, a mere boy, is never much at home. I was amused, however, to see him and his elder brother one day when Närshmali had actually really run away from them, complacently attending to the household chores themselves and, they said, just waiting for the *terershti* buffaloes that were their probable due to be paid to them.

(26) Pufvkiaroz: The only son of the notorious Toda Pebob who spent his time carrying off other men's wives, this man had an unhappy childhood. Both his mother and father died when he was very small, and there was nobody really left to look after him. It is said that surviving members of his father's family wanted to drown him as a useless [847] mouth, and that he was saved from this premature death by Miss C. F. [797] Ling of the Church of England's Zenana Mission. She brought him up to be a Christian, but when he came of age he is reported not to have accepted Christianity and to have returned to the Toda religion. He is a weak-chinned, thin man, with a resigned and apathetic look on his face, but recognized by the other Todas as knowing more than they because of his earlier association with the Christian Mission. For this reason, he has been appointed a member of the Collector's Toda Welfare Committee and he does everything that he can to assist his brethren. He also [464] works as a gardener in the Botanical Gardens.

(27) Mutmali: After Nalsirwuf, probably the second best-looking Toda girl. She is an inveterate flirt and has run away from her husband [832] many times with other men. Somehow, however, she always returns [837] after some days, without Pufvkiaroz exerting himself in any way. Last time I saw this happen, he simply carried on with the housekeeping himself, while assuring me that it would not be long before Mutmali came back. This proved to be true, and some five days later she was again at Melgarsh, sulking somewhat, and offering no excuse, but already having taken up the household chores again.

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complained that she was not feeling too well, and that she really did not have enough milk for twins a second time. The babies appeared quite well, the one who was presented to me as the girl seeming better and stronger than the other. Mutnarsh arrived soon after; he told me too that twins again were an impossible burden for his wife and himself, that Erzigwuf could not possibly feed them both, and ended up by asking me for some brandy for the mother, to which request I did not accede, as it is the Toda practice to distribute brandy to others on the occasion of a birth, and I suspected that that was the real motive of the demand. Besides, prohibition exists in the State of Madras, and it is impossible to obtain brandy except for medical purposes, this even being tied up with considerable formalities. The complaints about the difficulty of feeding twins made me suspect at once that, in accordance with Toda practice, it was not proposed to let more than one of them live, and that preferably the girl would be left to die. However, during the next days, Erzigwuf looked much better (she went out for a walk round the house on the 20th, in the evening) and so did the children, and I began to lose my suspicions.

I enquired who was the father, and I was assured that it was Mutnarsh. Kuddhue, since the first lot of twins were born, was not allowed near Erzigwuf, she told me, as she had the dreadful impression that they might be the result of his infirmities. Munbokwutn had had only fleeting intercourse with her, and that after her return from Palani with Mutnarsh, and after she knew herself to be pregnant. The other children were not jealous of the new babies, I was told, and from personal observation I gathered that this was correct. Both Sodup and Sodam seemed to have as much a share of their mother as before, both having been weaned from her some months earlier.

On the 24th May, the birth ceremony described by Rivers (*The Todas*, p. 324) under the name of *polk potha nit utpimi* took place. Readers are referred to that author for details of the ritual, but it can roughly be said that it is one in which the recently delivered mother is escorted to a *puzharsh* or seclusion-hut where she will remain in impurity until a few days before the next full moon, (in Erzigwuf's case, she remained there for only three days, as the new moon was just about due).

The ceremony took place in accordance with the prescribed rules, and Erzigwuf was accompanied by Mutnarsh and Silidz. What was unusual, however, was that when the part in which water is drunk out of bamboo tubes was reached, Sodup who was standing with the rest of

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still complaining that she had insufficient milk for both, I went to the bazaar and bought he a tin of Glaxo and a bottle of Gripe-ease. On the 30th May, there was a definite change. The boy started looking better, while the girl's health began to decline. Motsod had been to my bungalow early in the morning to ask me to come, as the little girl twin, he said, was unwell. She certainly looked listless and weak, and I wondered how this could have come about so quickly. I suspected that she was not being fed properly, and I imagined it was because the Todas had, all the same, decided to let her die, in accordance with their ancient custom of female infanticide, and of doing away with one of a pair of twins.

I went to the local government hospital, and requested the assistance of the Indian practitioner in charge, but he refused to come along, giving as an excuse that he could not possibly create a precedent by attending aboriginals at their homes. I tried to persuade Erzigwuf to travel to the hospital in my car, but she refused, saying that she was not well enough, and that the baby, besides, was too sick to stand the trip. Karnos put a word in too, stating that Western medicine was no good in a case like this, and that it was better for the child to remain at the *mad*. There was much wailing and crying over the bad health of the child, however, and to anybody unacquainted with Toda customs, this behaviour would have appeared perfectly genuine.

On the morning of the 31st, Munbokwutn turned up at my bungalow at 7.30 a.m. with the news that the child had died. I went immediately to Melgarsh and found them all assembled in the front room of the *Warthutthiarsh* (where all clan members must be brought, even from outlying *mads*, to die), wailing and lamenting loudly over the death of the baby. Toda visitors started arriving to take part in the mourning, and one of the first to crawl into the house on hands and knees, howling and sobbing ritually, was Erzigwuf's father, Tinmarsh of Pan *modol*. It all appeared perfectly real, and one nearly felt sorry for Mutnarsh, who was sitting outside the *arsh*, crying his eyes out, while Sodup, either from fright or in imitation, joined him heartily. Sodam, nearby, was quite indifferent as was also Munbokwutn, the youngest father. Only later, some four months afterwards did the Todas admit to my wife that they had let the little girl die, so that really all this exhibition of grief was purely conventional and, if not completely hypocritical, at least due to feelings of guilt or to the depressing effect which inexorable customs may have on people of this kind.

The funeral took place on June 1st, and as is the Toda custom, the little girl's dead body was first ceremoniously "wedded" to her *matchuni*,

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stinct and for the orderly social procreation of offspring. Formally, it is more difficult to say why this institution has taken on this curious appearance. As far as I know, authors so far have been rather at a loss to furnish a satisfactory explanation. Many, of course, have been given, with a great amount of variety in their choice.

For instance, we are given historical explanations. In India they say people have been polyandrous for many centuries; that there are indications, such as archaeological (about the Heftalite Huns, 6th c. A.D.) and literary (the Indian epic poem, the Mahabarata), that the people in this area, both Aryan and non-Aryan, were polyandrous in antiquity. Economic reasons for this have been given; *i.e.*, that the country is poor, that nomadism among Todas or Tibetans, in earlier times, perhaps led to a polyandrous society in order to limit the number of children. Then, demographical explanations have been given, that there is an excess of males over females in this society, and that they have to be polyandrous for that reason. For instance, the Todas practise female infanticide and this is given as a reason for their polyandry. Their men drink a lot of milk, and some people say that the fact that they have more proteins in their diet in this fashion produces more male offspring than female. I do not pretend to know how far this biological explanation is true. Sociological reasons have also been given, namely, that the men travel and have to leave one brother at home with the wife (a reason which I hinted at earlier). In east and south India, the people known as the Nayars, who once could also be called polyandrous, had a very definite military organization (somewhat like that of the Sikhs in the north), and that has been given as a reason why a people is polyandrous: one brother can always remain at home with the wife while the other is away serving with the colors.

It seems to me that these explanations are not sufficient. As far as the historical

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reasons are concerned, the Mahabarata epic is the only case of its kind in the whole of India. The Todas, when you ask why they are polyandrous, always say "Because we are the same people as those of the Mahabarata", but I am convinced that they have got this explanation from the anthropologists and not the other way around! As far as the economic reasons are concerned, these also seem to me insufficient, because there are people living in the same area, in the same physical environment, who are not polyandrous. Even the Tibetans, when they become Moslems, though their environment does not change, suddenly cease being polyandrous and live in the Islamic fashion. The rich Tibetans in central Tibet are also polyandrous, and obviously not for economic reasons.

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As regards the demographic reasons, the following statistics will show that there is not always an excess of males over females. In the Leh *tehsil* in Ladak, where I was, there are 14,760 men to 14,650 women, which is approximately equal. The excess of single women among the Tibetans (there are some left over, naturally, considering the number of brothers who have one wife) usually go into a monastery and become nuns. That is the way they solve their problem. The Todas, on the other hand, practise female infanticide, so that there are less women than men. However, back in Tibet, in the same town of Leh, one finds that the Hindus who live there number 36 men and 13 women, and yet they are monogamous. In southern India, there is a Moslem community known as the Moplahs, in which there are five men to one woman, and they are polygynous rather than polyandrous. Even in Europe, the Bulgars have 35,000 more men than women and yet, though they may have many faults, they certainly are not polyandrous.

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As far as the Todas are concerned, out of the 600-odd that exist, there are 340 men and 237 women, so that it really looks as if the reason given might be true in